



U.S. works to prevent an escalation across the Mideast as Biden pushes Israel to show restraint



A battery of Israel's Iron Dome defense missile system, deployed to intercept rockets, sits in Ashkelon, southern Israel, Aug. 7, 2022.

Associated Press

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News organizations urge Biden and Trump to commit to presidential debates during the 2024 campaign

By **DAVID BAUDER**
AP Media Writer

NEW YORK (AP) — Twelve news organizations on Sunday urged presumptive presidential nominees Joe Biden and Donald Trump to agree to debates, saying they were a “rich tradition” that have been part of every general election campaign since 1976. While Trump, who did not participate in debates for the Republican nomination, has indicated a willingness to take on his 2020 rival, the Democratic president has not committed to debating him again. Although invitations have not been formally issued, the news organizations said it was not too early for each

campaign to say publicly that it will participate in the three presidential and one vice presidential forums set by the nonpartisan Commission on Presidential Debates.

“If there is one thing Americans can agree on during this polarized time, it is that the stakes of this election are exceptionally high,” the organizations said in a joint statement. “Amidst that backdrop, there is simply no substitute for the candidates debating with each other, and before the American people, their visions for the future of our nation.”

ABC, CBS, CNN, Fox, PBS, NBC, NPR and The Associated Press all signed on to



Democratic presidential candidate former Vice President Joe Biden, right, answers a question as President Donald Trump listens during the second and final presidential debate Oct. 22, 2020, in Nashville, Tenn.

Associated Press

the letter. Biden and Trump debated twice in 2020. A third debate was canceled after

Trump, then president, tested positive for COVID-19 and would not debate remotely.

Asked on March 8 whether he would commit to a debate with Trump, Biden said, “it depends on his behavior.” The president was visibly miffed by his opponent in the freewheeling first 2020 debate, at one point saying, “will you shut up?”

Trump campaign managers Susie Wiles and Chris LaCivita said in a letter this past week that “we have already indicated President Trump is willing to debate anytime, any place and anywhere — and the time to start these debates is now.”

They cited the seven 1858 Illinois Senate debates between Abraham Lincoln and Stephen Douglas, saying “certainly today’s America deserves as much.”

The Republican National Committee voted in 2022 to no longer participate in forums sponsored by the Commission on Presidential Debates. The Trump campaign has not indicated it would adhere to that, but did have some conditions. The campaign managers said the commission selected a “demonstrably anti-Trump moderator” in then-Fox News host Chris Wallace in 2020 and wants assurances the commission debates are fair and impartial.

The Trump campaign

also wants the timetable moved up, saying that many Americans will have already voted by Sept. 16, Oct. 1 and Oct. 9, the dates of the three debates set by the commission.

The Biden campaign declined comment on the news organizations’ letter, pointing to the president’s earlier statement. There was no immediate response from the Trump campaign.

But on Saturday, Trump held a rally in northeast Pennsylvania with two lecterns set up on the stage: one for him to give a speech, the other to symbolize what he said was Biden’s refusal to debate him. The second lectern had a placard that read, “Anytime. Anywhere. Anyplace.”

Midway through his campaign speech, Trump turned to his right and pointed to the second lectern.

“We have a little, look at this, it’s for him,” he said. “See the podium? I’m calling on Crooked Joe Biden to debate anytime, anywhere, any place. Right there. And we have to debate because our country is going in the wrong direction so badly and while it’s a little bit typically early we have to debate. We have to explain to the American people what the hell is going on,” Trump said.

C-SPAN, NewsNation and Univision also joined the letter calling for debates. Only one newspaper, USA Today, added its voice. The Washington Post declined a request to join.

Certainly the broadcasters could use the juice that debates may bring. Television news ratings are down significantly compared with the 2020 campaign, although there are other factors involved, such as cord-cutting and the pandemic, that increased interest in news four years ago.

There were no Democratic debates this presidential cycle, and Trump’s refusal to participate in the GOP forums depressed interest in them. □

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U.S. works to prevent an escalation across the Mideast as Biden pushes Israel to show restraint

By ZEKE MILLER and MICHELLE L. PRICE

Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — The United States on Sunday highlighted its role in helping Israel thwart Iran's aerial attack as President Joe Biden convened leaders of the Group of Seven countries in an effort to prevent a wider regional escalation and coordinate a global rebuke of Tehran.

The U.S. assisted Israel in shooting down dozens of drones and missiles fired by Iran on Saturday in what was the first time it had launched a direct military assault on Israel. Israeli authorities said 99% of the inbound weapons were shot down without causing any significant damage.

U.S. officials said that despite the high interception rate, Iran's intent was to "destroy and cause casualties" and that if successful, the strikes would have caused an "uncontrollable" escalation across the Mideast. U.S. officials said Biden told Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, in an effort to contain tensions, that Washington would not participate in any offensive action against Iran, and the president made "very clear" to Netanyahu "that we do have to think carefully and strategically" about risks of escalation.

The push to encourage Israel to show restraint mirrored ongoing American efforts to curtail Israel's war against Hamas in Gaza, which is now in its seventh month, and to do more to protect civilian lives in the territory.

While the U.S. and its allies were preparing for days for such an attack, the launches were at the "high end" of what was anticipated, according to the officials, who were not authorized to publicly discuss the matter and spoke on condition of anonymity.

At one point, at least 100 ballistic missiles from Iran were in the air simultaneously with just minutes of flight time to Israel, the of-



In this image provided by the White House, President Joe Biden, along with members of his national security team, receive an update on an ongoing airborne attack on Israel from Iran, as they meet in the Situation Room of the White House in Washington, Saturday, April 13, 2024. From left to right, facing Biden are, Central Intelligence Agency Director William Burns; Avril Haines, Director of National Intelligence; Secretary of State Antony Blinken and National Security Advisor Jake Sullivan. Some papers on the desk have been blurred by the source for national security reasons.
Associated Press

ficials said. Biden and senior officials monitored the firings and interception attempts in real time in the White House Situation Room. The officials said there was "relief" in the room once they saw that the missile defense efforts had succeeded.

A senior U.S. military official said American aircraft shot down more than 70 drones and cruise missiles, while U.S. destroyers in the eastern Mediterranean Sea downed between four and six ballistic missiles, and an American Patriot missile battery in Iraq shot down one more.

"At my direction, to support the defense of Israel, the U.S. military moved aircraft and ballistic missile defense destroyers to the region over the course of the past week," Biden said in a statement late Saturday. "Thanks to these deployments and the extraordinary skill of our servicemembers, we helped Israel take down nearly all of the incoming drones and missiles."

Administration officials said the call demonstrated that despite differences over the war in Gaza, the U.S. commitment to Israel's defense was "ironclad" and

that the U.S. would mount a similar effort again if needed.

The officials rejected the notion that Iran intentionally gave Israel and the U.S. time to prepare for an attack, but said they took advantage of the time Iran needed before it was ready to launch the assault to prepare their response. The officials said Iran passed word to the U.S. while the attack was unfolding late Saturday that what was seen was the totality of their response. The message was sent through the Swiss government since the two countries don't have direct diplomatic ties. Biden, in a Saturday evening call with Netanyahu, urged that Israel claim victory for its defense prowess as the president aimed to persuade America's closest Middle East ally not to undertake a larger retaliatory strike against Iran, the officials said.

"I told him that Israel demonstrated a remarkable capacity to defend against and defeat even unprecedented attacks — sending a clear message to its foes that they cannot effectively threaten the security of Israel," Biden said in his statement after the call.

Biden had a call Sunday with Jordan's King Abdullah II in which the king said any "escalatory measures" by Israel would lead to a broader conflict in the region, according to the Royal Court. The White House said the situation in Gaza was discussed, and the leaders reaffirmed their cooperation "to find a path to end the crisis as soon as possible."

The president also spoke with some of the U.S. forces involved in shooting down the Iranian drones.

After the G7 videoconference Sunday, the leaders issued a joint statement "unequivocally condemning in the strongest terms" the direct attack by Iran while expressing "our full solidarity and support to Israel" and reaffirming "our commitment towards its security."

The group of advanced democracies — the U.S., Italy, Japan, Germany, France, Britain and Canada — also said that Iran, "with its actions, has further stepped toward the destabilization of the region and risks provoking an uncontrollable regional escalation." They said their nations "stand ready to take further measures now and in response

to further destabilizing initiatives."

A senior U.S. administration official said some of the countries discussed listing Iran's Revolutionary Guard Corps as a terrorist organization and unlocking further sanctions against Tehran, though no final decisions were made.

The Israel-Hamas war was referenced in the G7 statement, with the leaders saying they will bolster "our cooperation to end the crisis in Gaza, including by continuing to work towards an immediate and sustainable ceasefire and the release of hostages by Hamas, and deliver increased humanitarian assistance to Palestinians in need."

Speaking before a meeting Sunday of the United Nations Security Council, U.S. deputy ambassador Robert Wood reaffirmed the administration's "ironclad support for the defense of Israel."

"In coming days, and in consultation with other member states, the United States will explore additional measures to hold Iran accountable here at the United Nations," Wood said, calling for immediate Security Council condemnation of the Iranian attack.

The U.S. and Israel had been bracing for an attack for days after Iran said it would retaliate for a suspected Israeli strike this month on an Iranian consular building in Syria that killed 12 people, including two senior Iranian generals in the Revolutionary Guard's elite Quds Force.

Florida Sen. Marco Rubio, the top Republican on the Senate Intelligence Committee, criticized the White House for "leaking it to the press" that Biden told Netanyahu to take the win and not retaliate.

Rubio told CNN's "State of the Union" that it was "part of the White House's efforts to appease" people calling for a cease-fire in Gaza. □

U.S. judge tosses out lawsuits against Libyan commander accused of war crimes

By **MATTHEW BARAKAT**
Associated Press

ALEXANDRIA, Va. (AP) — A U.S. judge has tossed out a series of civil lawsuits against a Libyan military commander who used to live in Virginia and was accused of killing innocent civilians in that country's civil war.

At a court hearing Friday, U.S. District Judge Leonie Brinkema said she had no jurisdiction to preside over a case alleging war crimes committed in Libya, even though the defendant, Khalifa Hifter, has U.S. citizenship and lived for more than 20 years in the northern Virginia suburbs of the nation's capital as an exile from the regime of Moammar Gadhafi.

The ruling was a significant reversal of fortune for Hifter. In 2022, Brinkema entered a default judgment against Hifter after he refused to sit for scheduled depositions about his role in the fighting that has plagued the coun-



Libya's Khalifa Hifter, the commander of the self-styled Libyan National Army, is seen at the International Defense Exhibition and Conference in Abu Dhabi, United Arab Emirates, Monday, Feb. 20, 2023.

Associated Press

try over the last decade. But Hifter retained new lawyers who persuaded the judge to reopen the case and made Hifter available to be deposed. He sat for two separate depositions in 2022 and 2023 and denied orchestrating attacks against civilians.

Once a lieutenant to Gadhafi, Hifter defected to the

U.S. during the 1980s. He is widely believed to have worked with the CIA during his time in exile.

He returned to Libya in 2011 to support anti-Gadhafi forces that revolted against the dictator and killed him. During the country's civil war, he led the self-styled Libyan National Army, which controlled much of

the eastern half of Libya, with support from countries including Russia, Egypt and the United Arab Emirates. He continues to hold sway in the eastern half of the country.

In the lawsuits, first filed in 2019, the plaintiffs say family members were killed by military bombardments conducted by Hifter's army in civilian areas.

The lawsuits also alleged that Hifter and his family owned a significant amount of property in Virginia, which could have been used to pay off any judgment that would have been entered against him.

While the lawsuits were tossed out on technical issues over jurisdiction, one of Hifter's lawyers, Paul Kamenar, said Hifter denied any role in the deaths of civilians.

"He's not this ruthless figure that everyone wants to portray him as," Kamenar said in a phone interview Sunday.

Faisal Gill, a lawyer for plaintiffs in one of the three lawsuits that Brinkema tossed out Friday, said he plans to appeal the dismissal.

Mark Zaid, lawyer for another set of plaintiffs, called Brinkema's ruling perplexing and said he believes that the court's jurisdiction to hear the case had already been established at an earlier phase of the case.

"A U.S. citizen committed war crimes abroad and thus far has escaped civil accountability," Zaid said Sunday in an emailed statement.

In court papers, Hifter tried to claim immunity from the suits as a head of state. At one point, the judge put the cases on pause because she worried that the lawsuits were being used to influence scheduled presidential elections in Libya, in which Hifter was a candidate. Those elections were later postponed. □

Barges break loose on Ohio River in Pittsburgh, damaging a marina and striking a bridge

PITTSBURGH (AP) — More than two dozen river barges broke loose from their moorings and floated down the Ohio River in Pittsburgh, striking one bridge that had already been preemptively closed and damaging a marina, officials said. The boats eventually were pinned to the riverbank or went over a dam downstream, officials said.

Pittsburgh police, fire and emergency medical services responded around 11:25 p.m. Friday to reports of the barges "floating uncontrolled" down the river, Pittsburgh Public Safety said in a statement. The area had been hit by flooding after heavy rains Thursday.

The Sewickley Bridge was struck by a barge a few minutes before 2 p.m. Saturday, the Pennsylvania Department of Transportation said. It "was closed in advance of the strike and

will remain closed until our crews complete an inspection," spokesperson Steve Cowan said.

Officials in Moon Township, which is connected by the bridge to the community of Sewickley, earlier said the span would be temporarily closed "due to unmanned barge passing through."

Eleven of the 26 barges that broke free were quickly contained to one side by another towing vessel just downstream, said Cmdr. Justin Jolley of the Coast Guard marine safety unit in Pittsburgh. Nine others were collected at the Emsworth lock and dam downstream.

Five or six barges went through the dam. Four ended up just downstream at a lock and dam, while another ended up on the bank of the river and was stabilized. Marine safety units were searching for



A group of barges sit pinned against the Emsworth lock and dam in Pittsburgh, on Saturday, April 13, 2024.

Associated Press

one barge unaccounted for, Jolley said.

Pittsburgh public safety officials reported damage to Peggy's Harbor, a marina on the river. The Pittsburgh Post-Gazette reported that the McKees Rocks Bridge was also closed as a pre-

caution but later reopened following inspection.

Twenty-three of the barges were carrying dry cargo, mostly coal, and at least one was loaded with fertilizer, according to the owner, Jolley said. Three were empty. There were no haz-

ardous materials on any of the vessels, the city said.

The Coast Guard put out a broadcast notice to mariners to inform them about the potential hazard, but high water was preventing traffic on the river, Jolley said.

The barges were owned or operated by Campbell Transportation Co., the city's statement said. Jolley said Coast Guard officials were working with the owner on a salvage plan. Pennsylvania State Police and other agencies were also alerted.

The vulnerability of bridges to strikes from barges and ships came into stark relief last month when a container ship rammed a support of the major Francis Scott Key Bridge in Baltimore, collapsing the span and leading to the deaths or presumptive deaths of six road workers. □

Cyprus suspends processing of Syrian asylum applications as boatloads of refugees continue arriving

By MENELAOS HADJICOSTIS
Associated Press

NICOSIA, Cyprus (AP) — Cyprus said Saturday it's suspending processing all asylum applications by Syrian nationals because large numbers of refugees from the war-torn country continue to reach the island nation by boat, primarily from Lebanon.

In a written statement, the Cypriot government said the suspension is also partly because of ongoing efforts to get the European Union to redesignate some areas of the war-torn country as safe zones to enable repatriations.

The drastic step comes in the wake of Cypriot President Nicos Christodoulides' visit to Lebanon earlier week to appeal to authorities there to stop departures of migrant-laden boats from their shores. The request comes in light of a 27-fold increase in migrant arrivals to Cyprus so far this year over the same period last year.



A man walks by the fence at the Pournara migrant reception center in Kokkinotrimithia outside of capital Nicosia, Cyprus, on Jan. 24, 2024.

Associated Press

According to Cyprus Interior Ministry statistics, some 2,140 people arrived by boat to EU-member Cyprus between Jan. 1 and April 4 of this year, the vast majority of them Syrian nationals departing from Lebanon. In contrast, only 78 people arrived by boat to the island nation in the corresponding period last year.

On Monday, Christo-

doulides and Lebanese caretaker Prime Minister Najib Mikati called on the European Union to provide financial support to help cash-strapped Lebanon stop migrants from reaching Cyprus.

Just days prior to his Lebanon trip, the Cypriot president said that he had personally asked EU Commission chief Ursula von der

Leyen to intercede with Lebanese authorities to curb migrant boat departures.

Although the EU should provide "substantial" EU support to Lebanon, Christodoulides said any financial help should be linked to how effectively Lebanese authorities monitor their coastline and prevent boat departures.

Lebanon and Cyprus already have a bilateral deal where Cypriot authorities would return migrants attempting to reach the island from Lebanon. But Cypriot Interior Minister Constantinos Ioannou has said that Lebanon is refusing to hold up its end of the deal because of domestic pressures.

Lebanon — which is coping with a crippling economic crisis since 2019 — hosts some 805,000 U.N.-registered Syrian refugees, of which 90% live in poverty, the U.N.'s refugee agency says. Lebanese officials estimate the actual num-

ber is far higher, ranging between 1.5 and 2 million. Many have escaped the civil war in their country which entered its 14th year. Ioannou this week visited Denmark, Czechia and Greece to drum up support for a push to get the EU to declare parts of Syria as safe. Doing so would enable EU nations to send back Syrians hailing from those "safe" areas.

The Cypriot interior minister said he and his Czech and Danish counterparts to draft an official document for the EU executive to get a formal discussion on the Syrian safe zone idea going.

Additionally, Ioannou said he hand his Czech counterpart agreed on a sending joint fact-finding mission to Syria to determine which areas in the country are safe.

However, U.N. agencies, human rights groups, and Western governments maintain that Syria is not yet safe for repatriation. □

More civilians die in Ukraine as a think tank warns delays in U.S. aid will hamper Kyiv's forces

KYIV, Ukraine (AP) — More civilians died across Ukraine Sunday as analysts warned that delays in U.S. military assistance would see Kyiv struggle to fight off Russian offensives.

One man was Sunday killed after a Russian drone hit the truck he was driving in the Sumy region, the local prosecutor's office said. Elsewhere, a 67-year-old woman was killed after shelling hit an apartment block in the Donetsk region, said Gov. Vadym Filashkin.

Officials in the Kharkiv region also said Sunday that they had retrieved the bodies of a 61-year-old woman and a 68-year-old man killed by a Russian strike the previous day. Ten Russian Shahed-type drones were shot down over the Kharkiv region overnight, the Ukrainian Air Force said Sunday. Meanwhile, shelling in the

Russian-occupied Kherson region killed two civilians Sunday, said Moscow-installed leader Vladimir Saldo. Ukrainian drones were also reported in Russia's Krasnodar and Belgorod regions and over the Black Sea, the Russian Defense Ministry said.

The news came as the Institute for the Study of War, a Washington-based think tank, warned that delays in Western military assistance would increasingly hamper Ukraine's ability to push back Russian advances.

With the war in Ukraine entering its third year and a vital U.S. aid package for Kyiv stuck in Congress, Russia has used its edge in firepower and personnel to step up attacks across eastern Ukraine. It has increasingly used satellite-guided gliding bombs — dropped from planes from a safe



A Ukrainian serviceman from the Azov brigade known by call sign Chaos, right, carries mortar shell, while he waits for a command to fire, at positions of 122 mm HM 16 mortar around one kilometer away from Russian forces on the frontline in Kreminna direction, Donetsk region, Ukraine, Friday, April 12, 2024.

Associated Press

distance — to pummel Ukrainian forces beset by a shortage of troops and ammunition.

In its report, the ISW said that Russian forces were prioritizing grinding, tactical gains with operational-

level efforts focusing on the cities of Lyman, Chasiv Yar, and Pokrovsk.

"The Russian military command likely assesses that Ukrainian forces will be unable to defend against current and future Russian of-

fensive operations due to delays in or the permanent end of U.S. military assistance," the think tank said. Ukraine's military chief, Gen. Oleksandr Syrskyi, said Saturday that Ukraine's battlefield situation in the industrial east had "significantly worsened in recent days," as warming weather allowed Russian forces to launch a fresh push along several stretches of the more than 1,000-kilometer (620-mile) -long front line.

In an update on the Telegram messaging app, Syrskyi said that Russian forces had been "actively attacking" Ukrainian positions near the cities of Lyman, Bakhmut and Pokrovsk, and beginning to launch tank assaults as drier, warmer spring weather made it easier for heavy vehicles to move across previously muddy terrain. □

Pakistani police search for gunmen who abducted bus passengers and killed 11 in the southwest

By **ABDUL SATTAR**
Associated Press

QUETTA, Pakistan (AP) — Pakistani police searched for gunmen who killed nine people after abducting them from a bus on a highway in the country's southwest. The same attackers earlier killed two people and wounded six in another car they forced to stop. The abductions took place on Friday in Baluchistan province, which has long been the scene of an insurgency by separatists fighting for independence.

The outlawed Baloch Liberation Army claimed responsibility for the attack. It said it had information from sources that plain-clothed spies were on the bus, according to a statement from the group. The gunmen killed the nine men after checking their ID cards to ensure they were intelligence officers.

The group offered no evidence to support the allegation that spies were on the bus.

Earlier Saturday, deputy commissioner of police Habibullah Mosakhail said the gunmen had set up a



Ambulance carry bodies of people who were killed by gunmen, arrives at a hospital in Quetta, Pakistan, Saturday, April 13, 2024.

Associated Press

blockade, then stopped the bus and went through the passengers' ID cards. They took nine people with them, all from the eastern Punjab province, and fled into the mountains, he said. Police later recovered nine bodies under a bridge about 5 kilometers (3 miles) from the highway.

On Friday, the same gunmen had opened fire at a vehicle that failed to stop for their blockade, killing two and wounding six, police said.

A search for the perpetrators was underway, Mo-

sakhail said. The bus was heading from the provincial capital of Quetta to Taftan, a town bordering Iran.

Witness Sajjad Ahmed, who was a passenger on the bus, said there were 70 people on board. Masked men stopped the vehicle near the city of Nushki, took away nine people and told the driver to continue the journey, he told reporters.

"We heard the armed men open fire on those people as we drove away," said Ahmed. "We heard the sounds of firing. The driver

took the bus to the closest police station. We didn't know if those people were alive or not."

Another passenger, Mohammad Tahir, said the gunmen who boarded the bus had targeted people from Punjab. "They said, 'Get up from your seats whoever is from Punjab,'" said Tahir. They asked the standing passengers if they were from that province and then swore at them. "You kill our children," said Tahir, quoting the gunmen. "You do bad things to us."

An initial police report said that 19 of the passengers were traveling to Iran on their way to Western countries as migrants. The report, shared with The Associated Press, said that two of those abducted and killed were human smugglers. Punjab has emerged as a hotspot for Pakistanis trying to make the perilous journey to Europe hoping for a better life there.

Pakistani Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif condemned the attack, expressing his "deep sorrow and regret over this shocking incident." He offered his condolences

to the families of the victims and said he stood by them in their hour of grief, according to a statement from his office.

"The perpetrators of this incident of terrorism and their facilitators will be punished," Sharif said.

Abductions are rare in Baluchistan, where militants usually target police forces and soldiers or infrastructure.

Although the government says it has quelled the insurgency, violence in Baluchistan has persisted and the bus attack is the latest incident in the restive region.

Authorities are also struggling to contain militancy in other parts of the country.

In the northwest province of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, the army said Saturday that two soldiers were killed in a gunfight with militants in Buner district.

In a statement, the army said a high-profile Pakistani Taliban commander was also killed. He was involved in activities against security forces, extortion and the targeted killing of civilians, according to the statement. □

174 people stranded in the air are rescued, almost a day after a fatal cable car accident in Turkey

ISTANBUL (AP) — The last of 174 people stranded in cable cars high above a mountain in southern Turkey were brought to safety Saturday, nearly 23 hours after one pod hit a pole and burst open, killing one person and injuring seven when they plummeted to the rocks below.

Interior Minister Ali Yerlikaya announced the successful completion of the rescue operation on X Saturday afternoon.

A total of 607 search and rescue personnel and 10 helicopters were involved, including teams from Turkey's emergency response agency, AFAD, the Coast Guard, firefighting teams and mountain rescue teams from different parts of Turkey, officials said. Helicopters with night-vision

capabilities had continued rescuing people throughout the night.

The stranded people had been stuck on the Tunektepe cable car, just outside the Mediterranean city of Antalya, since 5:30 p.m. on Friday, when the accident occurred.

Istanbul resident Hatice Polat and her family were rescued seven hours into the ordeal. Speaking to the Anadolu agency, she said the power went out and the pod flipped four or five times.

"The night was awful, we were very scared. There were children with us, they passed out," she said. "It was torture being up there for seven hours. It is swaying every second, you're constantly in fear. ... It was very traumatic, I don't know



A severely damaged cabin of a cable car transportation system is seen outside Antalya, southern Turkey, Friday, April 12, 2024.

Associated Press

how we'll get over this trauma."

State-run Anadolu Agency identified the deceased as a 54-year-old Turkish man. Those injured included two children and were six Turkish citizens and one Kyrgyz national. They were all rescued by Coast Guard

helicopters soon after the crash and sent for treatment. Images in Turkish media showed the battered car swaying from dislodged cables on the side of the rocky mountain as medics tended the wounded.

Yerlikaya also announced that 13 people rescued

from other cars were also taken to hospitals for checkups.

Friday was the final day of a three-day public holiday in Turkey marking the end of the Muslim holy month of Ramadan, which sees families flock to coastal resorts. The cable car carries tourists from Konyaalti beach to a restaurant and viewing platform at the summit of the 618-meter (2,010-foot) Tunektepe peak. It is run by Antalya Metropolitan Municipality. The cable car line was completed in 2017 and receives a major inspection around the beginning of the year, as well as routine inspections throughout the year.

Antalya Chief Public Prosecutor's Office has launched an investigation. □

Aruba's Bocas: home to the rarest fossil reefs on the planet!

(Oranjestad)—If you've been to the northern coast of Aruba already, you've probably noticed how the ground differs entirely from the sandy beaches on the southern part of the island. These hard surfaces, with sharp bumps and holes are actually fossilized coral reefs, of which its growth and changes can be traced back to the last glacial period.

On May 30 2023, geoscientists, Dr. Patrick Boyden from the Marum research faculty at the University of Bremen, Prof. dr. Alessio Rovere from the Ca' Foscari University of Venice and Prof. dr. Gianfranco Scicchitano, from the University

of Bari Aldo Moro, presented their research on these fossilized coral reefs at the University of Aruba. Their focus for their research included studying the health and formation patterns of these coral reefs, and to investigate how these reefs have responded and can respond to fluctuating sea levels or extreme weather, like hurricanes and tsunamis.

Through underwater and land surveillance, and 3D models of the reefs, they were able to narrow down when these formations started to take place. They were also able to track the fluctuation of sea levels during the past hundred or



even thousands of years, and the effects that this fluctuation has had on the coral reefs of the windward side of Aruba.

These findings can certainly put things into perspective. The ground on which we have walked many times in the northern part of the island hold such rich history, history that dates back to a time that most of us cannot even imagine. As the scientists themselves have pointed out, these fossilized reefs on the windward side are truly an incredible and rare remnant of geological history, as they provide

a clear view of how these reefs have formed.

This research is also important for the future of coral reefs on the island. By studying rising sea levels and climate impact on these coral reefs, we are able to take concrete action in protecting and preserving our coral reefs. So, if you are ever visiting one of the bocas or driving along the northern part of the island, please be conscious to help protect our natural historical remnant. Oh, and wear (coral-friendly) sunscreen!



The Bushiribana Gold Mill Ruins and its history

(Oranjestad)—The **Bushiribana Gold Mill Ruins** is one of the most visited places by tourists on the island, as it lies along the northern coast line near the mini pool and on the way to the Natural Bridge. Despite its seemingly plain appearance, this ruin represents one of the most important histories of the island: The Aruban Gold Rush.

Built in 1872 by English company Aruba Island Gold Mining Company Ltd, the gold mill at Bushiribana was constructed in the area where most gold was found by locals. The story of gold on Aruba actually dates back to 1725, when a first exploration for gold on the island was commissioned by the Dutch West India Company. Under the leadership of Mr. Paulus Printz, a three-year search was conducted on Aruba, to no avail. Though they found some gold, it was enough to motivate a further search, and the assignment was discontinued by Printz himself.

It wasn't until 100 years later, in 1824, when a young boy found a

lump of gold while out herding his father's sheep. His father took it to a local merchant who then sold the lump for \$70. Unbeknownst to the boy and his father, they quite literally struck gold, and as word got out, a gold fever spread among the locals who started searching for more gold. About 25 pounds worth was found.

At the same time, the Aruban government took immediate actions, and informed Curacao that gold was found. At first, everyone could look for gold, as long as they sold it to the government. However, after some time, the government decided to implement stricter rules and banned local search parties.

Over the years, concession-holding had seen different companies from around the world, all of which used primitive methods to dig and carve out gold from the rocks. Aruba Island Gold Mining Company Ltd. was no different, but used a unique method that involved grinding the rocks and letting the dust be blown away by the strong northeast wind,

leaving clumps of gold behind. The next step was melting the gold and letting it attach to quicksilver in order to obtain pure gold. All these processes were done at the Bushiribana Gold Mill.

The gold mill itself had a short life-

span: only 10 years in service, but its structure remained relatively solid till this day, and is now a historical remnant.

Sources: Etnia Nativa & goldminer-anch.com.





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Celebrating & Supporting Women at the Hilton

The IWD, International Women's Day has been celebrated around the world since 1911. The day aspires to inspire gender equality around the world and to free people from bias, stereotypes, and discrimination, while promoting diversity, fairness, and inclusion.

Each year on March 8th, the island is reminded of these values, and the need to work together to collectively celebrate achievements and raise awareness about prominent issues.

At the Hilton Aruba Caribbean Resort & Casino IWD activities were spread along a number of days in March. The most memorable activity was the Women's Café, in which team members were invited to connect over coffee, cookies and snacks, to exchange views about important topics, in small groups, sitting at round tables.

Each group enjoyed the contributions of team members as well as professionals. They discussed how to balance a career and family life, how to age healthily, how to nurture one's own spirituality, and how to be true to oneself, becoming who we really are, rather than who we are expected to be.

It was at once clear that all women around the tables shared the same dilemmas and pondered the same existential questions. The sisterhood of women that formed in the room lent the experience an intimate feel, easing connections between participants from different departments and age groups.

The forum also appreciated the candid and interesting talk by Marisol Croes who described her own personal journey, to define her individual identity.



The women at the Hilton, purposeful and enthusiastic, celebrated the day by supporting and motivating each other, and derived a deep sense of community and empathy from the involvement.

The event was organized by the Department of Human Resources, and Nicole Hart of Ama Lurra, Consultancy Coaching and Training.

#InspireInclusion2024.



Aruba to me

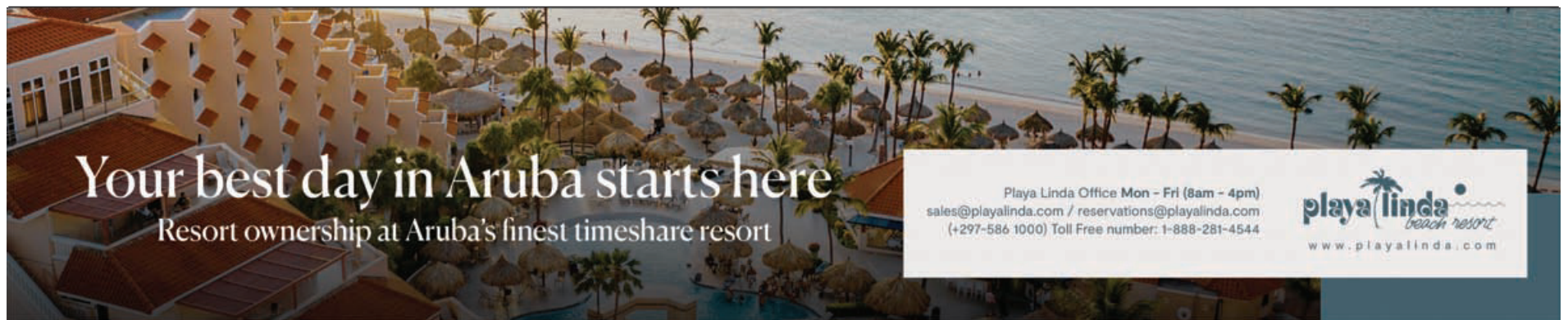
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Papiamentu words and phrases you may want to know!

(Oranjestad)—Aruba is a melting pot of different nationalities, cultures and languages. Primarily for this reason, the average Aruban can understand and speak Dutch, English and Spanish relatively well. However, as much as we pride ourselves in being able to communicate with almost everyone, we cherish our native tongue Papiamentu above all else. Want to learn some common words in our language? Here are a few basic words and phrases that can get you a hat tip from an Aruban.

When you arrive at the airport in Aruba, one of the first words in Papiamentu you may encounter is "Bon bini." Bon bini in Papiamentu means welcome, and is probably the most famous Papiamentu word for tourists.

Hi! Bye!

To be fair, there is no unique way to say "hello" in Papiamentu. At least, not officially. We often just use the English "hello" or "hey", or Dutch "hallo" to greet someone. We do however, always follow it up with "con bay?" or "con ta?" Con bay is a shortened version of "con ta bay?", which essentially means "how are you?"

The word "con" in Papiamentu means "how?" and is pronounced with a rounder "o" sounds, like in the English word "cone". "Ta bay" refers to how you are doing.



When we say goodbye, we use the word "ayo" (not like the Ayo Rock Formation, but also...kinda?). We may also use "te oro", which means "see you later".

Greetings during the day

Most, if not all, languages have different ways to greet according to the time of day, and Papiamentu is no different. Since Papiamentu is heavily influenced from Portuguese and Spanish, some of these phrases may look very familiar.

1. Bon dia is used in the morning, up to about noon. Bon dia essentially means good morning. The word "bon" means "good", and while "dia" does not directly mean "morning" in English, it is used often to refer to the morning time.

2. Bon tardi. In the afternoon to early evening hours, we use "bon tardi" to greet people,

which means "good afternoon". "Tardi" actually comes from the word "atardi", which directly translates to "afternoon". However, the shortened "tardi" is used to keep the rhythm on the phrase. And the same could be said for our last greeting of the day.

3. Bon nochi. You guessed it, "bon nochi" means "good night". Just like "tardi", "nochi" is actually the shortened version of the word "anochi".

Yes...no...maybe?

The affirmative and negative expression is very simple in Papiamentu. Just like Spanish, our yeses are "si" and our no's are "no". Pretty easy right? If you want to gain some extra points from younger locals, you can also say "se", which is a more casual affirmative used mostly by the younger generation. However, do note: some older generations may find this improper and not respectful, so keep that in mind.

Thanks man...

Lastly, a word that we can also say more often is "danki", which means literally "thank you". "Danki" is derived from the Dutch word "bedankt". Though we don't really have a translation for "I appreciate it" in English, we do use "masha danki" to convey the message. "Masha" means "a lot" or "very", so "masha danki" means "thank you very much".



Article by: Etnia Nativa

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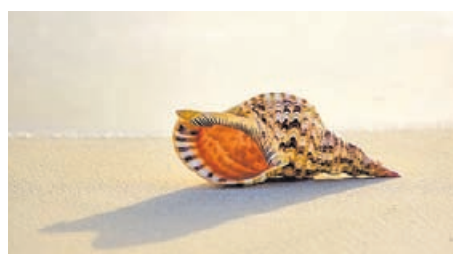
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Shells are not for souvenirs

We know that the massive industry devastates marine life and its habitat worldwide. At least 50,000 mollusk species inhabit the Earth. Whereas some shells are harvested for their meat, others like the chambered nautilus, known for its beautiful, coiled multi-colored protective casings are collected solely for decorative purposes.

Currently marine protected areas vary in type and range from wildlife refuges to research facilities. Within these areas, human activity is restricted for conservation purposes to protect natural as much as cultural resources. Today it is prohibited by law to take shells or anything made with or out shells of the island. However this was not always the case since many marine shells were used to make rhythms, body decoration, tools and weapons since the existence of man, raw marine materials were scruti-



nized for the elaboration of all kinds of unimaginable artifacts and as a useful ingredients and a variety of purposes for ancient Arubans.

Tribal artisans were highly regarded artists and handymen of a people. Some were able to transfer spiritual powers in their work, through prayers or blessings. Survival and culture go hand in hand and the artisan uses everything he can put into his hands. Tribal royalties, objects, ornaments, war and hunting equipment, etc. They had their physical purpose, as well as a symbolic and spiritual connection value. The goal of exhib-

iting social distinction or status. It had its incessant demand when it came to the hand and quality of experienced craftsmen to supply these social outfits. These artistic creations worked perfectly as a medal of bravery for a warrior as a token of appreciation or as a tired magic totem, a "counter" to ward off omens and bad spells.

Others had to promote healing and spread cleansing powers. However, as a symbol of political status and valued as a trade item. Strombus shells were on many occasions the basic material used in the manufacture of the so-called Quiripa. Having one or more holes and some cases a semi-drilled hole



Episode CXVIII- 118

that is believed still to be perforated. Many "button" as Aruban's calls these shell beads since their similarity to a button. Many were rescued during salvage archaeological excavations in Santa Cruz, Aruba. Santa Cruz was a highly organized settlement and important town during Aruba's Ceramic Period. There is even an area in Sta. Cruz called "Boton" because of the many shell buttons that were found in that area.

To get to know more over Aruba's and its origins, its animals and culture, we highly recommend you to book your visit for our renowned cultural encounter session has been entertaining curious participants for decades. Mail us at etnianaativa03@gmail.com or WhatsApp 297 592 2702 to confirm your participation. Our facilities and activities take place close to high rise hotels.

Lessons from our elders

Plants and fruits for medicinal use

(Oranjestad)—Though western medicine is now widely used for common illnesses and to keep our bodies healthy and happy, it is still very common in every household in Aruba (and around the world) to have staple home remedies that is passed on through generations. Here are some tips that our elders have passed on to us over the years.

Pineapple

Pineapple has more uses than topping it on your Christmas ham. According to elders, the skin of a pineapple is great to use to refresh your



body. Clean the skin thoroughly and make tea or warapa* with it. It is said that this tea can also be drank after an operation on the ovaries or uterus. This gets rid of irritation and inflammation.

When the fruit is unripe and green, this can be used to stimulate menstruation flow in women. This also stimulates the passing kidney stones. When ripe, the fruit can be used for poisoning in the gut and can help treat rheumatic diseases, like arthritis.

However, breastfeeding women who cannot produce much milk are advised not to consume too pineapple, and people with acid reflux are recommended to not consume any pineapple at all.

Arrowroot

Arrowroot is native to tropical America and can be sold as a powder or whole. It is said that you can take arrowroot powder and make a "shalup" (porridge) for stomach pain or when you're feeling weak. You can make it with milk too, but it is advised to best use just water. You can also add prunes for a bit of sweetness. Arrowroot shalup is also good to treat an unhealthy gut or for diarrhea.

To make arrowroot shalup, boil a bit of water and add one tablespoon of arrowroot powder and stir continuously until you reach porridge consistency. If you make a shalup with milk, add a pinch of salt. Raw arrowroot powder can be used to powder babies.

Eggplant/Aubergine

Eggplants, or aubergines, are easy to find in supermarkets around the world and can be grown all year round on the island. Related to potato and tomato, eggplants are good to calm nerves. It can also be used to lower blood pressure, by steeping its leaves in boiled water

and drinking it. You can also make eggplant juice to help purify your blood. However, do make sure to drink slowly; let it mix with your spit and then swallow.

Eggplant kataplan* can also be used to treat skin tumors, abscesses and hemorrhoids. Eggplant kataplan can also be used externally to treat arthritis.

*warapa: term referring to a water and sugar solution, a.k.a simple syrup.

*kataplan: porridge-like mixture used externally for wounds or parts of the body that are painful or swollen.



Aruban snacks and where to find them

ORANJESTAD — Want to taste something different for a change? How about some Aruban snacks that you can find all around the island? Hop in your car, and go to these locations to find some of the most popular and tasty snacks that are beloved by our locals.

One of the staples of Aruban cuisine and snacks is the Pastechi. Pastechi is a Caribbean fried pastry that is filled with cheese, meat, chicken, veggies and sometimes even fish! Or perhaps you might want to try a croquette, locally called a "kroket," which is a crusty fried snack with typically a meat and dough mix filling. The Aruban kroket is based on its Dutch counterpart, the "bitterbal".

These two snacks are typically found in all local snack trucks, which can be found all over the island, including on the side of the main road that stretches from San Nicolas to the Hotel Area. You can also find pastechis and krokets at local bakeries and snack shops, like Bright Bakery in Piedra Plat, Huchada in Santa Cruz or Pastechi House in the city center. These places



may also sell other snacks and sandwiches too, perfect for on-the-road lunch break.

While you're at it, why not accompany your snack with a refreshing "batido"? Batidos are fruit shakes, typically made with added milk for some creaminess. However, you can also ask to hold the milk. Batidos are commonly found in snack shops too. You may find some batido shops next the flea markets downtown, or if you're on your way to San Nicolas, at Mauchi Smoothies and Juice Bar in Savaneta (located



at the side of the main road).

If you are looking for something a bit more fresh and healthy, why not try some coconuts, or shaved ice from local vendors? These vendors carry their little shop at the back of their truck, so they are ever-moving around the island. However, there are a few spots where you can almost always find a coconut/shaved ice vendor:

1. Right next to the Red Anchor in San Nicolas, on the way to Baby Beach.
2. Along the main road next to the airport field.
3. At the California Light House.
4. At the Alto Vista Chapel.

These vendors may also sell other delights, like the beloved coconut-based dessert "cocada" or peanuts. All in all, in Aruba, you can always find some place to take a break and have a bite of something local, you maybe just might have to look for them!

Photo credit: wheninaruba.com

Birds of Aruba

ORANJESTAD — On May 11th, 2010, the Aruba Birdlife Conservation was founded with the aim of protecting the biodiversity in general and birds in and around Aruba in particular.

Among other things, the foundation will focus on increasing the survival chances of species of wild birds by promoting their preservation and conservation. The foundation publishes the most beautiful pictures of local birds on their social media that show us the beauty of Aruba's birds and nature in general. Aruba Today gives you a little peek with the following pictures and descriptions from the foundations Facebook page.

The Great Egret



Serenity in Aruba's National Park, a Great Egret flying in peace. When it is peaceful and quite, beautiful things start happening in nature.

Canadian in the house



The breeding season is over and it's getting pretty cold in North America. Shore birds have started moving southwards as early as July. This wetland beauty wants to keep its toes warm. Our Canadian friends know exactly where they can do so best. A Greater Yellowlegs rediscovering Aruba's Bubali Wetlands.



Cabochon

In its living form of so much more value than any gemstone. Aruba's smallest and most master of flight. A top pollinator. A hovering Blenchi inspecting the human who just entered his territory.

English: Blue-tailed Emerald (male) Dutch: Blauwstaartsmaragdkolibrie (mannetje).

Aruba's to enjoy. Aruba's to protect.

CROSSWORD

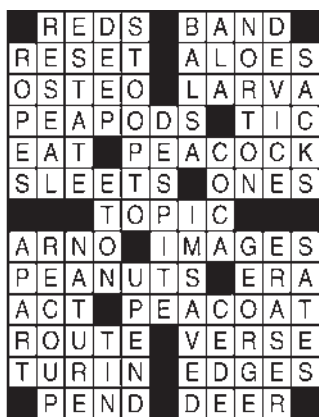
By THOMAS JOSEPH

ACROSS

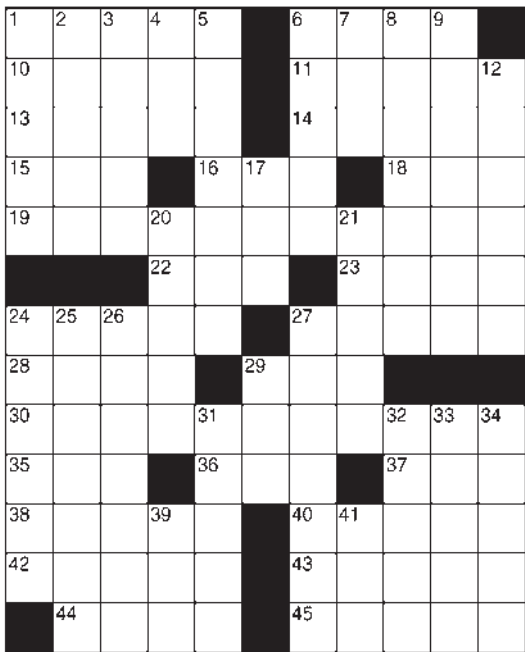
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25 Rey-
kjavik's
nation
26 Grassy
expanse
27 Yule
singer
29 Table part
31 Despised
32 Some
messages
33 Social
class
34 Leg joints
39 Lyric
poem
41 "Xanadu"
band



Saturday's answer



4-15

AXYDLBAAXR
is LONGFELLOW

One letter stands for another. In this sample, A is used for the three L's, X for the two O's, etc. Single letters, apostrophes, the length and formation of the words are all hints. Each day the code letters are different.

4-15

CRYPTOQUOTE

HRIEK, ZDO HWJOK SB ZDO

GSWZDT, ZDO USXWJ KSCO SB

ZDO UOHI. — CEZH

THYMCEKKO-VOTZ

Saturday's Cryptoquote: MAY WE NOT JUST GRIEVE, BUT GIVE. MAY WE NOT JUST ACHE, BUT ACT. — AMANDA GORMAN, "HYMN FOR THE HURTING"

Cruise Schedule

TUE	09	SYMPHONY OF THE SEAS	08.00	21.00	I	1
WED	10	CARNIVAL MAGIC	07.00	15.00	B	1
		NORWEGIAN PRIMA	10.00	20.00	C	1
		MARELLA VOYAGER	08.00	20.00	I	1
THU	11	MSC DIVINA	07.00	14.00	B	1
		RHAPSODY OF THE SEAS	08.00	18.00	C	1
FRI	12	CARNIVAL PRIDE	09.00	22.00	C	1
		NORWEGIAN SKY	10.00	20.00	I	1
SAT	13	NORWEGIAN JADE	07.00	20.00	C	1
TUE	16	RHAPSODY OF THE SEAS	08.00	21.00	B	1
		CARNIVAL HORIZON	09.00	22.00	C	1
WED	17	ODYSSEY OF THE SEAS	08.00	23.00	C	1
SAT	20	NORWEGIAN PRIMA	10.00	19.00	C	1

Helpful tips for your stay on Aruba

(Oranjestad)—When traveling to another country, especially for the first time, it is always better to be over-prepared than under-prepared. That is why we have a list of basic—but important—information that we think may come in handy to Aruba's visitors.

lets used on the island: type A with two flat prongs; type B with two flat and one grounding prong, and on occasion, type F with two round prong and two earth clips on the side. However, Type A is most commonly found in homes and establishments.

Supermarket hours



Supermarket hours may vary depending on where you are staying on the island. Generally though, most supermarkets are open from 8am to 9 or 10pm, Monday through Saturday. On Sundays, supermarkets generally close earlier; mostly around 2pm.

Electrical power



Aruba generally operates on 110V to 127V supply voltage and 60Hz. There are also three types of out-

Drinking water



The water that flows through the sinks of every house, hotels and other establishments is distilled and perfectly safe to drink. Aruba's drinking water exceeds WHO's international standards for water quality, so there is no need to buy bottled water from the store.

Safety



Since February 2024, Aruba has been categorized as the safest country in the Caribbean by The Telegraph, and many tourist that visit have often told us how they feel safe to explore the island or walk around at night. However, rare incidents do occurs, so keep yourself and your belongings safe.

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24/7

U.S.-China competition to field military drone swarms could fuel global arms race

By FRANK BAJAK
AP Technology Writer

As their rivalry intensifies, U.S. and Chinese military planners are gearing up for a new kind of warfare in which squadrons of air and sea drones equipped with artificial intelligence work together like a swarm of bees to overwhelm an enemy.

The planners envision a scenario in which hundreds, even thousands of the machines engage in coordinated battle. A single controller might oversee dozens of drones. Some would scout, others attack. Some would be able to pivot to new objectives in the middle of a mission based on prior programming rather than a direct order.

The world's only AI superpowers are engaged in an arms race for swarming drones that is reminiscent of the Cold War, except drone technology will be far more difficult to contain than nuclear weapons. Because software drives the drones' swarming abilities, it could be relatively easy and cheap for rogue nations and militants to acquire their own fleets of killer robots.

The Pentagon is pushing urgent development of inexpensive, expendable drones as a deterrent against China acting on its territorial claim on Taiwan. Washington says it has no choice but to keep pace with Beijing. Chinese officials say AI-enabled weapons are inevitable so they, too, must have them.

The unchecked spread of swarm technology "could lead to more instability and conflict around the world," said Margarita Konaev, an analyst with Georgetown University's Center for Security and Emerging Technology.

As the undisputed leaders in the field, Washington and Beijing are best equipped to set an example by putting limits on military uses of drone swarms. But their intense competition, China's military aggression in the South China Sea and per-



In this photo from the Defense Visual Information Distribution Service, British soldiers launch a drone during Project Convergence exercises at Fort Irwin, Calif., on Nov. 4, 2022.

Associated Press

sistent tensions over Taiwan make the prospect of cooperation look dim.

The idea is not new. The United Nations has tried for more than a decade to advance drone non-proliferation efforts that could include limits such as forbidding the targeting of civilians or banning the use of swarms for ethnic cleansing.

Drones have been a priority for both powers for years, and each side has kept its advances secret, so it's unclear which country might have an edge.

It's not clear how many drones a single person would control. A spokesman for the defense secretary declined to say, but a recently published Pentagon-backed study offers a clue: A single operator supervised a swarm of more

than 100 cheap air and land drones in late 2021 in an urban warfare exercise at an Army training site at Fort Campbell, Tennessee. Not to be outdone, China's military claimed last year that dozens of aerial drones "self-healed" after jamming cut their communications. An official documentary said they regrouped, switched to self-guidance and completed a search-and-destroy mission unaided, detonating explosive-laden drones on a target.

A year ago, CIA Director William Burns said Chinese Communist Party leader Xi Jinping had instructed his military to "be ready by 2027" to invade Taiwan. But that doesn't mean an invasion is likely.

Just before he died last year, former U.S. Secretary

of State Henry Kissinger urged Beijing and Washington to work together to discourage AI arms proliferation. They have "a narrow window of opportunity," he said.

Xi and President Joe Biden made a verbal agreement in November to set up working groups on AI safety, but that effort has so far taken a back seat to the arms race for autonomous drones.

The competition is not apt to build trust or reduce the risk of conflict, said William Hartung, a senior research fellow at the Quincy Institute for Responsible Statecraft.

If the U.S. is "going full speed ahead, it's most likely China will accelerate whatever it's doing," Hartung said.

There's a risk China could offer swarm technology to U.S. foes or repressive countries, analysts say. Or it could be stolen. □



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Scottie Scheffler unstoppable and wins another Masters green jacket

By **DOUG FERGUSON**
AP Golf Writer

AUGUSTA, Ga. (AP) — Scottie Scheffler had no doubts about this Masters, and neither did anyone watching. He pulled ahead with magnificent shots Sunday around the turn and poured it on along the back nine at Augusta National for a 4-under 68 to claim his second green jacket in three years.

Scheffler is simply unstoppable at the moment, and he had help from a faltering cast of contenders to make it look easier than it was.

Much like Tiger Woods he made the outcome look inevitable with sublime control, the difference being a peach shirt instead of Sunday red, and no fist pumps until it was over.

After sharing hugs with caddie Ted Scott and Collin Morikawa, Scheffler turned to face the crowd with both arms raised. "WOOOOO!" he yelled, slamming his fist.

Scheffler won by three shots in 2022 with a meaningless four-putt on the final hole. There was no drama this time, either.

No uphill climb in golf is sweeter than toward the 18th green at Augusta National, thousands of spectators rising to their feet with every step to salute the best player in the game. Scheffler made a 3-foot par putt for a four-shot victory over Masters newcomer Ludvig Aberg of Sweden, who did his best to make a battle out of it.



Scottie Scheffler celebrates his win at the Masters golf tournament at Augusta National Golf Club Sunday, April 14, 2024, in Augusta, Ga.

Associated Press

Aberg, among four players who had a share of the lead at one point, lost ground with his approach went into the pond left of the 11th hole and he made double bogey. Against a player like Scheffler, those mistakes are not easy to overcome.

Aberg closed with a 69 and was the runner-up.

Morikawa, who had two double bogeys to fall out of the hunt, shot 74 and tied for third with Tommy Fleetwood (69) and Max Homa (73), whose hopes ended on the par-3 12th with a double bogey from the bushes, not Rae's Creek.

The 27-year-old Scheffler is the fourth-youngest player to have two green jackets. He stretches his lead at No. 1 in the world to levels not seen since the prime of Woods. Scheffler now has three victories against the strongest fields — Bay Hill, The Players Championship

and the Masters — in his last four starts. The other was a runner-up finish in Houston. Woods closed with a 77 and finished at 16-over 304, the highest 72-hole score of his career.

Scheffler said he was in tears before the final round in 2022 when he had a three-shot lead going for his first major. His wife, Meredith, gave him the assuring words and he sailed to victory. His wife had to watch this one from home in Dallas, where she is expecting the couple's first child at the end of the month.

Scheffler finished at 11-under 277 and earned \$3.6 million from the \$20 million purse, pushing his season total on the PGA Tour to over \$15 million in just nine tournaments.

Perhaps even more daunting for the rest of golf is that Scheffler still hasn't had a round over par this year. He has 10 victories worldwide

dating to his first PGA Tour title at the Phoenix Open just two years and two months ago.

During that stretch, Scheffler has finished in the top 10 a staggering 65% of the time.

Scheffler had a lonely walk toward the scoring area with his wife. His two sisters, Sara and Molly, were the first to greet him, followed by his parents and Randy Smith, the only coach he has ever had.

It was the fourth straight Masters when the winner came to the 18th green with one arm in the green jacket. That doesn't mean Sunday was a walk in golf's most gorgeous garden.

Four players had a share of the lead at various points along the front nine, and then Scheffler began to assert himself with three straight birdies around the turn.

He got up-and-down with a 10-foot birdie putt at the par-5 eighth. He hit the perfect wedge that caught the ridge and came inches within going in on No. 9, leaving him a tap-in birdie. And then he holed another 10-foot birdie putt on the 10th to build a two-shot lead.

And then, just like in the best days of Woods, he let everyone else make the big numbers.

In the group ahead, Aberg's approach to the 11th slammed off the bank and into the water, leading to double bogey.

Homa managed a tough par on the 11th, only to hit it

so long over the par-3 12th the golf ball plunged deep into bushes and left him no choice but to take a penalty drop. His chip didn't reach the green, and two putts later he had double bogey.

Morikawa already had begun to slide by taking two shots to get out of a deep bunker left of the ninth green for double bogey. He all but sealed his fate with a shot into the water on the 11th and took double bogey.

Aberg was the only one who battled back, and Scheffler kept answering with birdies. He hit the 13th green in two and two-putted for birdie. His approach to the 14th hit the slope toward the back and rolled down to a foot from the pin.

His final birdie came from just inside 10 feet on the 16th.

Defending champion Jon Rahm, now with Saudi-funded LIV Golf, closed with a 76 and tied for 45th, 20 shots behind Scheffler. He was in Butler Cabin to help Scheffler into the green jacket.

Rahm had not faced Scheffler all year and witnessed what the PGA Tour players are up against each week. His tee-to-green play is reminiscent of Woods, though certainly not the emotion, the worldwide appeal or the number of victories.

Scheffler stays in his own little world on the course, which might be just as well. No one is close to him in the game at the moment. □

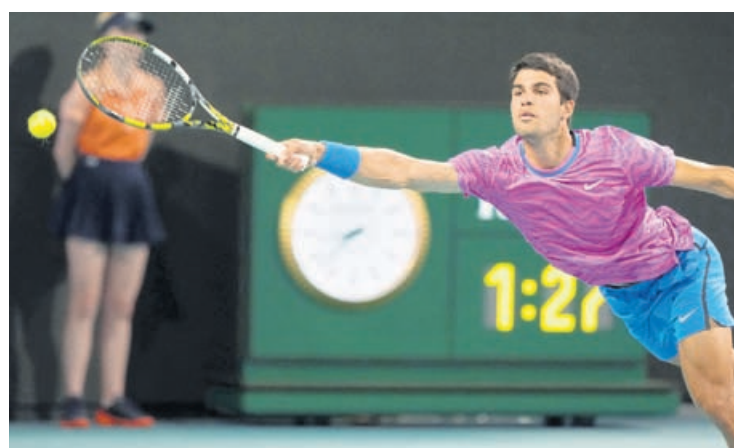
Carlos Alcaraz will miss the Barcelona Open with the same arm issue that kept him out of Monte Carlo

BARCELONA, Spain (AP) — Carlos Alcaraz pulled out of the Barcelona Open on Sunday with the same injury in his right forearm that kept him out of the Monte Carlo Masters, leaving his French Open preparation on hold. Alcaraz is a two-time Grand Slam champion and former No. 1-ranked player who is currently No. 3. The 20-year-old from Spain

won the title at the clay-court Barcelona Open in 2022 and 2023.

He hasn't played in a tournament since losing to Grigor Dimitrov in the Miami Open quarterfinals last month.

Alcaraz won the U.S. Open in 2022 and Wimbledon last year. His lone trophy so far this season came at Indian Wells, California, in March.



The French Open begins May 26. Alcaraz reached the semifinals there last year before losing to eventual champion Novak Djokovic. □

Carlos Alcaraz of Spain is unable to reach a shot by Grigor Dimitrov of Bulgaria during the Miami Open tennis tournament, Thursday, March 28, 2024, in Miami Gardens, Fla.

Associated Press

The NBA play-in games are set. It'll be Heat-76ers, Hawks-Bulls, Lakers-Pelicans and Warriors-Kings

By TIM REYNOLDS
AP Basketball Writer

LeBron James and the Los Angeles Lakers are staying in New Orleans for a couple more days. Stephen Curry and Golden State will head back to Sacramento to face elimination again. And the Miami Heat are back in the play-in, which started their run to the NBA Finals last year.

The play-in field is set. On Tuesday, it's the Lakers facing the Pelicans for a No. 7 seed in the Western Conference, then the Warriors and the Kings in an elimination game. On Wednesday, it's the Heat going to Philadelphia to decide No. 7 in the Eastern Conference, followed by Atlanta at Chicago in a win-or-else matchup.

"Look, this is the best time of year," Heat coach Erik Spoelstra said. "These kind of environments, the games, the context ... you can't expect it to be easy." Of the 20 postseason seeds, 15 were decided on Sunday, as were three of the four play-in matchups and three of the four first-round series that don't include play-in teams.

The final order in the East: Boston, New York, Milwaukee, Cleveland, Orlando, Indiana, Philadelphia, Miami, Chicago and Atlanta. In the West, the order from No. 1 to No. 10 is Oklahoma City, Denver, Minnesota, the Los Angeles Clippers, Dallas, Phoenix, New Orleans, the Lakers, Sacramento and Golden State.

"Good momentum going into the playoffs," Thunder star Shai Gilgeous-Alexander said after his team finished No. 1 in the West. "Nothing to complain about. ... We won a lot of basketball games. That's what it's all about. That's what everybody laces their shoes up for, to win basketball games and have a chance to win a championship."

The only first-round series that was set before Sunday was Clippers-Mavericks in the West. Added to the list now: Bucks-Pacers and



Brooklyn Nets' Lonnie Walker IV, center, goes up to shoot as Philadelphia 76ers' Kyle Lowry, left, and Tyrese Maxey, right, watch during the first half of an NBA basketball game, Sunday, April 14, 2024, in Philadelphia.

Associated Press

Cavaliers-Magic in the East, along with Timberwolves-Suns in the West.

The games themselves didn't bring much drama on the regular season's final

day. Of the 15 games, only one was decided by one possession — and it was at Madison Square Garden, where New York got a big win. The Knicks held off Chicago 120-119 in overtime, a result that let them leapfrog Milwaukee for No. 2 in the East.

"A hell of a regular season," Knicks guard Donte DiVincenzo said. "Let's get ready for the playoffs."

Among the biggest blowouts on Sunday: Oklahoma City beat Dallas by 49 to wrap up No. 1 in the West, Indiana stayed out of the play-in by beating Atlanta by 42, Sacramento downed Portland by 39, San Antonio topped Detroit by 28 and Orlando — which could have been in the play-in

with a loss — rolled past Milwaukee by 25.

Orlando won 47 games to capture the Southeast Division and get back to the playoffs for the first time since 2020.

"So proud of them," Magic coach Jamahl Mosley said. "There's not really a lot of words for it. You talk about a group who has been up, been down, battled back, resilient ... they proved it. Big stakes, they took it in their own hands."

The Heat-76ers winner will face No. 2 seed New York in Round 1 of the playoffs, and the loser will play host to the Hawks-Bulls winner on Friday night for the chance to meet No. 1 overall seed Boston. □



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Palm Beach – When you think of a restaurant that pleases the needs of a whole family or a large group of people with all different tastes? Think Water's Edge Restaurant. Located at the shore of Aruba's most wonderful beach, The Eagle Beach Aruba. Water's Edge Restaurant is guaranteed to serve you a fantastic magical night to remember. Whether you prefer to enjoy the view from indoors air conditioned comfort, outdoors in the soft tropical breeze or under a palapa with your toes in the sand. This spectacular restaurant offers the best ocean view sunset or sky full of stars dinner while the crispy Caribbean night wind caresses your face and plays with your hair.

From the minute you arrive there will be a great staff welcoming you with the most contagious smiles and warmth. The intense menu with a great variety of appetizers, main courses and delicious desserts will not disappoint. Seafood, Steaks and international favorites. All on one menu specially made just for you.

Culinary Voyage

Start your gastronomic journey with a scrumptious appetizer such as the Maryland Crab Cakes, maybe the Crispy Calamari or the mouth-

watering creamy Garlic Tarragon Shrimp. You can also opt for a classic French Onion Soup, a Lobster Bisque or the famously Water's Edge House Wedge, a crisp wedge of fresh romaine lettuce topped with homemade blue cheese dressing, diced tomatoes, chopped bacon, caramelized pecans and blue cheese crumbles, drizzled with balsamic reduction. This followed by the Chef's special of seafood such as Fresh salmon filet seasoned and grilled, topped with lemon cilantro butter and served with homemade mashed potatoes and fresh asparagus, a nice plate of Ahi Tuna or a succulent pasta dish like the Florentina Fettuccine Alfredo. Meat Lovers will have their fix with choices of a devourable 22oz. Bone-In "Tomahawk" Rib-Eye, pan seared in garlic infused oil and finished in the oven or our juicy N.Y Strip Loin, seasoned & grilled. All our steaks options are seasoned with a blend of kosher salt and freshly cracked black pepper. Served with homemade mashed potatoes, seasoned vegetables and a choice of red wine reduction, green peppercorn demi glace, mushroom sauce, or bacon blue cheese butter. For extra sides the options are delectable. Fresh asparagus, seasonal vegetables, mashed or baked potatoes, fries or rice and beans. Combine your personal choice with one



of the most exclusive wine from the great selection of international wines to compliment your dish. Kids will enjoy every item of the specially compiled kids menu and there are also optional dishes for all vegans, vegetarians and gluten-free guests. To end the culinary voyage with some luscious sweetness, the desserts are wild. From a piece of coconut flan, NY cheese cake, carrot cake, chocolate brownie or our classic Tiramisu with kahlua and amaretto served with chocolate sauce and coffee jelly. Not to mention the fresh and light piece of key lime pie.

Creating memories

If you are planning a birthday dinner, here you will receive a nice bottle of champagne to take home with you to extend your experience even further whether on the beach or your own private balcony.

Live entertainment

Just about every day of the week, there is a different live entertainment by the best local artists for you to enjoy. Whether you're in a romantic mood, or more in a swinging mood, there is absolutely a night especially for you where you can combine great music with delicious cocktails mixed with concoctions. In addition, Water's Edge offers three daily Happy Hours from 12pm-1pm, 4pm-6pm and again from 9pm-10pm with all premium brands specially priced.

Breakfast, Lunch & Dinner

Whether you join us for breakfast, lunch or dinner, Water's Edge Restaurant & Bar offers a relaxed and inspirational dining experience overlooking the beautiful Eagle Beach with spectacular ocean views. Gather with friends and family for drinks and appetizers or a night of pampering and relaxation.

Water's Edge is open daily from 8am – 11pm

To reserve your table please call +297 583-8000 / ext 8106 or direct line +297 586-9494

For more information about the menus, entertainment and hours, please visit the website watersedge-aruba.com

"Water's Edge Restaurant is



where magnificent beach views, amazing food and excellent service come together."

Thank you to all our guests
From the bottom of our hearts, we would like to Thank all of our guests who showed us so much love and support all through 2021, and hopefully will continue to do so in 2022. What we are most grateful for is that we could get back to doing what we love, which is looking after our guests. So, thank you for every dinner, lunch, breakfast, very to-go order, every glass of wine, every birthday, anniversary and date-night that you spent with us this last year. To our new guests, Welcome! We hope you to see you back soon!

